



Senior Checklist

Below is a month-by-month overview of the steps you and your child will want to take to prepare for college applications, admission, and graduation.

SEPTEMBER

Prepare College Lists

Sit down with your child to research and create a list of colleges that they would like to apply to. Your local library can provide college resource books and internet access to facilitate the process. Make sure that your child's list includes:

- At least one state college or university.
- At least one or two “safety” schools.
- At least one or two “reach” schools.

Determine which standardized testing is required for your child’s preferred schools. Register for the SAT test, SAT Subject Tests, and/or the ACT by visiting www.collegeboard.com and www.act.org.

OCTOBER

College Application Forms

- Create a list of application deadlines for each school
- Make sure that your child has completed the necessary application forms for each of the colleges on his/her list.
- Check each application form to make sure that the information is complete and accurate.

Please note: There are fee waivers available online and at the counseling office to help you paying college applications and standardized testing.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

Personal Statement

- Make sure that your child has completed his/her personal statement.



- Check with your child to make sure that s/he is aware of the standardized test requirements for each school to which s/he is applying.

Letters of Recommendation

- Students must submit a resume to teachers.
- Apply for a Federal Student Aid PIN at www.pin.ed.gov. The student and parent must have a PIN in order to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You will need your Social Security number to apply. This PIN is your electronic signature. Do not misplace it!!!!

Private College Application Packets

- Make sure that your child submits his/her private college application packets on time.
- Before s/he sends the application packets, check to see whether all of the necessary components listed below are included:
 - o College application form
 - o Personal statement
 - o Transcript
 - o Letter(s) of recommendation
 - o Any additional information or documents requested by a specific school

Congratulate your child and celebrate! With your help, s/he has completed some major steps for college and career success by early December.

JANUARY

Income Tax Information

Complete your income tax return information as soon as possible after January 1. While you may not usually complete your taxes at this time of year, doing so can help you receive more money!

Your current tax return information is requested when your child applies for financial aid to pay for college. The earlier you apply for financial aid, the more money available to help you pay for tuition. You should have your 2014 income tax ready and available because you will be completing the FAFSA after winter break.



Financial Aid

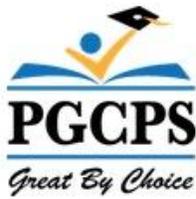
Complete the parent section of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Completing the FAFSA is the first—and most important—step toward receiving financial aid to pay for college. The Federal government determines the amount of money your family is able to contribute toward your child's college tuition based on the information you provide on the FAFSA. Submitting the FAFSA is free and the earlier you submit it (after January 1), the more money available to help pay for college. You and your child are encouraged to complete the FAFSA online because you will receive results faster and it is often a more accurate approach to completing the FAFSA than using the paper version.

To complete your section of the FAFSA, you will need:

- Your Social Security number
- Your Alien Registration number (if applicable)
- A current bank statement
- Your most current income tax return information, W-2 forms, and 1099 folios
- Mortgage information (if applicable)
- Records of untaxed income, like Social Security, welfare, disability, and veterans' benefits
- Records that describe any unusual family circumstances (e.g. medical and dental bills not covered by health insurance, loss of employment, etc.)
- Business and farm records (if applicable)

After completing the FAFSA, make a copy for your records and submit it as soon as possible after January 1 and no later than February 15. The **deadline to receive aid in the state of Maryland is March 1st!**

For additional information on completing the parent section of the FAFSA, call the U.S. Department of Education at (800) 4-FED-AID, and/or access online help at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>.



FEBRUARY

Addressing Senioritis

- Congratulations! Your child is a second-semester senior and you have helped him/her successfully navigate the hardest parts of the college application process!
- Remember though: It's not over yet! Colleges pay close attention to a candidate's second-semester grades. College acceptance can even be revoked if an already-admitted student performs poorly, so make sure that your child remains diligent about his/her grades.
- Acknowledge your child's hard work up to this point, but prompt him/her to continue to excel.
- Don't allow him/her to jeopardize his/her future by slacking off. Just as a sprinter doesn't slow down before crossing the finish line, don't allow your child to do so either.

Scholarship Searches

- There are several thousand scholarships available each year. Some are given to students who exhibit certain traits, while others are given to students who belong to certain groups, are of a certain heritage, live in a particular city or neighborhood, or belong to a certain faith. Your child is likely to find at least one scholarship that matches his/her qualifications.
- Make sure that s/he has researched and applied for at least two scholarships.
- Pay attention to deadlines and make sure that your child submits his/her scholarship applications on time.
- For more information on searching for scholarships, check out www.fastweb.com, www.uncf.org (United Negro College Fund), and <http://www.hsf.net/> (Hispanic Scholarship Fund).



MARCH

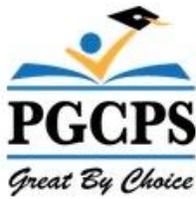
Review the Student Aid Report (SAR) with your child to make sure that you reported accurate information and that the Department of Education did not make mistakes in calculating your Estimated Financial Contribution (EFC). Check for accuracy on your:

- Family income figures.
- Student income figures.
- Student and family tax contribution.
- Number of immediate family members currently enrolled in college.
- Family and student savings- and interest-earned figures.
- Be sure to look at the third page of the SAR for your next steps, tax filing information, and additional sources for help.
- If there is no BFC on your SAR, the Department of Education will instruct you to provide more information.
- If you notice a mistake in the figures reported on your SAR, contact the Department of Education as soon as possible at (800) 433-3143.

APRIL

Financial Aid Offers

- Determine a bottom-line financial contribution—the absolute largest amount of money per school year that your family is able to contribute to your child's college tuition.
- Review all of your child's financial aid offers with him/her. Make sure that all of the information is accurate.
- Review and choose loans carefully. Some have lower interest rates and are subsidized, meaning that they accrue interest only after your child has graduated from college.
- If your family is not able to contribute enough money to cover the whole EFC or if certain colleges require you to pay more than your bottom line, you and/or your child may have to rely on loans and scholarships to cover the gaps, or your child may need to consider enrolling elsewhere.
- Make sure you have applied for housing and completed and sent all paperwork to the college or university.



MAY

College Preparation Congratulations!!! Your child will be attending college!!!

- Make sure student has submitted his/her letter of intent to the college he/she will be attending in the fall.
- Help him/her create a budget for the upcoming school year so that s/he can successfully manage his/her money.
- Help your child collect and pack the items that s/he will need for college.
- Reflect on and celebrate your child's accomplishments!
- Acknowledge yourself for having successfully helped your child navigate the college application process!

Your child is College Ready! Good Luck!